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NHLI'S "ELP" LATINAS PURSUE HIGHER EDUCATION, ENJOY HIGHER INCOMES, ARE COMMITTED TO MENTORING AND HAVE AGGRESSIVE WEALTH AND PROFESSIONAL ASPIRATIONS

Preliminary Data from the National Hispana Leadership Institute's "State of Latina Leaders in America" Survey Confirms that NHLI's Flagship Program, the Executive Leadership Program, Has a Direct Impact and Influence on Upwardly-Mobile Latinas

WASHINGTON, D.C. – As the National Hispana Leadership Institute (NHLI) concludes the celebration of its 25th Anniversary and 2012 Annual Leadership Conference, the Institute readies itself to foster the next generation of Latina Leaders by releasing preliminary data from its survey, *"State of Latina Leaders in America,"* at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. today.

NHLI's flagship professional training program, the Executive Leadership Program (ELP), provides mid-career professional Latinas in the public and private sectors four intensive one-week training sessions over a nine-month period. The Harvard Kennedy School of Government and the Center for Creative Leadership have been two principal partners of NHLI since the ELP began in 1987. The rigorous curriculum consists of learning about Cross-Cultural Communication, Strategic Management, Public Policy and Leadership Building. Graduates from NHLI's ELP - spanning its 25-year history – as well as other Latinas from throughout the country convened this weekend in Washington, D.C. for continued training in the areas of Finance and Wealth, Public Policy, Non-Profit Management, Community Engagement, Digital Media and more.

Nearly 100 ELP Alumnae participated in the *"State of Latina Leaders in America,"* a non-scientific survey designed to gauge ELP Alumnae's views on careers and personal advancement, educational attainment, income, leadership, mentoring, community impact and professional aspirations. Survey respondents were mostly between the ages of 30-49 and represent government, non-profit and corporations working at the senior level. The following is a breakdown of findings and trends identified as a result of participants submissions:

INCOME LEVELS

When entering the ELP, 42% of participants reported a yearly income of less than \$70,000.

Currently, 53% of ELP Alumnae have an average yearly income of \$100,000-149,999, while 23% report a yearly income of \$150,000 and above. The likelihood of earning more than \$100,000 greatly increases after enrolling and graduating, from NHLI's Executive Leadership Program.

EDUCATION LEVELS

Thirty two percent (32%) of respondents had a B.A./B.S. degree, and 45% had an M.A./M.S. degree when entering the ELP. Following program completion, 30% of Alumnae completed either an MBA, J.D. or Ph.D. Twenty four percent (24%) of Alumnae report their intent to pursue a J.D. or Ph.D. within the next two to five years. Graduates of NHLI's ELP are committed to pursuing higher education levels, including an MBA, J.D., and PhDs. This is a significant finding when compared to the overall Latina

population. According to the Department of Education, Latinas in America make up less than 6% of PhD graduates, while 13% of ELP graduates attained PhDs.

WEALTH AND FINANCE

Eighty four percent (84%) of NHLI alumnae are homeowners and 43% report a plan to own an investment property within the next two to five years. When asked what areas of their personal finance strategy they plan to strengthen, respondents confirm a shift in mindset relative to fiscal responsibility, personal wealth and investments:

- Strengthening their retirement savings ranked the most important to 58% , followed by increasing their charitable contributions and philanthropic giving (28%). Investing in real estate (27%) and investing in the stock market (16%), followed, while ranking contributing to political campaigns at 13%.

MENTORSHIP

Seventy percent (70%) of Alumnae surveyed indicated that their strongest mentor was female. Of those with mentors, 68% identified their strongest mentor as Hispanic/Latino and 40% reported their strongest mentor was female family member (including mother and grandmother) followed by community leader at 27%. Latinas' commitment to mentoring continues as 97% of alumnae reported that they consider themselves to be mentors.

When asked what practical skills younger generations/ emerging Latinas need to strengthen or develop, Alumnae answered that 67% of those surveyed suggested emerging Latinas need to strengthen or develop strategic thinking skills. Additionally, 49% report writing is a practical skillset that younger generations must strengthen, followed by communication skills at 41%.

PROFESSIONAL ASPIRATIONS

Despite financial success and educational achievement, 76% of our NHLI Alumnae do not serve on corporate boards. When asked what professional achievements they plan to pursue with the next 5-10 years, 59% of NHLI ELP Alumnae aspire to serve on corporate boards (59%), 22% plan to lead their own Non Profit, 20% plan to start their own business, 12% hope to run for political office; and 9% would like to sell their existing business. 77% of these women feel they are qualified to achieve these aspirations.

LATINA FOR PRESIDENT

Lastly, NHLI posed the question on the group's belief on whether a Latina will run for president in the next 12 years. 68% of NHLI alumnae believe a Latina will run for president within the next 12 years. Of those, 54% believe this candidate will win the office of the presidency.

"As NHLI prepares to foster the next generation of Latina leaders, it is now evident that Latinas are ready to wield financial influence and continue their commitment to mentoring and community impact. This organization is well-positioned to address the needs of new generations," said Marieli Colon-Padilla, Board Chair. "This is a preliminary study that indicates emerging trends to be mindful of within the Latina professional community. NHLI is committed to evolving this preliminary survey into a comprehensive impact study within the next calendar year."

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The National Hispana Leadership Institute (NHLI) is a national leadership development organization focused on Latina leaders. Founded in 1987, NHLI has trained and empowered more than 10,000 Latina leaders from the public and private sectors who have been appointed to leadership positions in government, corporate America, nonprofits, foundations and entrepreneurs. NHLI's mission is to develop Hispanas as ethical leaders through training, professional development, relationship building and community activism. For more information, visit www.nhli.org.